

CHILDREN'S SERVICES REVIEW COMMITTEE 10th July 2008

Pupil Referral Unit (PRU)

Report of Director of Children's Services

Strategic Priorities: Learning City, CI03

1. Why has this report come to the Review Committee?

- 1.1 This report is to update Children's Services Review Committee on the current position with regard to the PRU following inspection. It details the position in relation to:
- the Ofsted report
 - management and staffing of the provision
 - programmes for young people in Key Stage 4
 - Action Plan and options for consideration in responding to the judgement of "special measures".

2. Introduction/Background

- 2.1 This inspection of the PRU took place on March 18th and 19th and the report from Ofsted was received on Monday 21st April. Following inspection the PRU was placed in Special Measures.
- 2.2 The need for change had previously been recognised and the constitution of the PRU was included in the review of SEN Provision agreed by Cabinet in February 2007 (now incorporated into the School Place Planning Project). Related decisions in this regard have already been made by Children's Services Leadership Team.

3. Current Position

3.1 The Report and Outcomes

- 3.1.1 The final report is appended as Annex 1 to this report. It was published on the Ofsted website on 28th April.
- 3.1.2 The report follows the standard format for reports and does attempt to recognise the good and satisfactory practice observed by inspectors. The report makes clear that the provision at KS4 is the reason for the judgement of Special Measures.
- 3.1.3 There are 5 areas noted in the "What the school should do to improve further" section of the Report. They are:
- Ensure that procedures for ensuring the safety and well-being of all pupils are applied rigorously
 - Raise standards and improve achievement

- Improve leadership and management to ensure that all pupils receive the same quality and full entitlement of provision
- Improve the accuracy and reliability of self-evaluation
- Improve attendance across the PRU, and particularly in Key stage 4

3.1.4 As required, an Action Plan was produced within 10 working days of publication of the report (12th May). The Action Plan addresses the 5 areas noted above. The Action Plan was approved by HMI and is included as Annex 2.

3.1.5 As part of the process to support and monitor delivery of the Action Plan a Strategy Group has been convened. This group meets on a fortnightly basis and is led by the Chief Inspector.

3.2 Staffing

3.2.1 Following inspection and feedback an interim headteacher, to focus on Key Stage 4 has been put in place until the end of September. As well as addressing the immediate operational needs the interim headteacher will play a key role in planning any new provision.

3.2.2 The permanent headteacher post, previously agreed by CSLT, has been filled and will take up position in September.

3.2.3 Additional staffing resources to support the PRU, and particularly KS4, in the immediate future have been identified and are in place. Staff with significant expertise in attendance and supporting vulnerable young people have been transferred from the former BIP programme and are working with PRU staff and pupils as a priority. Additional support via named attendance officers has also been secured.

3.3 Provision for Young People

3.3.1 Additional support has been put in place to promote and support full attendance across all key stages of the provision.

3.3.2 The significant focus for change, referenced in paragraph 3.2.3, is for pupils formerly in the Lombard Street provision. All year 10 pupils have now been transferred to the Cheadle Centre provision, recognised by inspectors as significantly better than Lombard Street. All remaining pupils in Lombard Street have been placed on individualised 14-19 learning pathways which meet individual need and aspirations and constitute a full educational entitlement.

4. Future of PRU Provision

4.1 The PRU is registered as a school. When a school is placed in special measures it is necessary to consider closure of the provision. Having considered this as an option CSLT considered this to be the most

appropriate course of action in the current circumstances for the following reasons:

- The existing provision is too diverse and necessarily is based around tailored delivery to meet individual pupil needs. This breadth of provision and highly specialised and often individual support and intervention programmes is difficult to demonstrate consistently in self-evaluation. There is therefore a continuing and heightening risk of retaining the current PRU in that it weakens all key stages and provisions.
- The imperative to strengthen leadership, governance and management and to improve the clarity of these arrangements. Again, the diversity of the current provision does not lend itself to this.
- The opportunity to undertake a fundamental review of provision and ensure that what is in place better meets the needs of children and young people. Ensuring that good provision can be appropriately recognised by OFSTED in the future. It is acknowledged that none of KS1, KS2, KS3 or Returners provisions would have been placed in special measures had they been subject to separate inspections and judgements.

4.2 Following the decision to close the current PRU, the proposal for future provisions is as follows:

- A KS1 Nurture provision with a strong focus on special needs and parenting, including links through governance of the provision with the parenting commissioner and strategy. It is proposed that this provision be managed through SEN department.
- A Returners and Young Mums provision where the special needs of pupils are addressed and met and where there are strong governance links in place with Safeguarding and Health Improvement, particularly CAMHS. It is proposed that this provision be managed through SEN department.
- A key stage 2/3 provision (split-site) supporting core and transition curriculum. It is proposed that the incoming PRU Headteacher manage this provision. It would be a hard federation with the 14-19 provision proposed below, with a single management committee including representation from SEBD and mainstream headteachers as well as other key partners.
- A 14-19 provision that would begin to build capacity in the City for the raising of the participation age by 2013. Young people could remain in this provision as part of their individualised 14-19 learning pathway beyond the current compulsory school leaving age. It is proposed that the incoming PRU Headteacher manage this provision. It would be a hard federation with the KS2/3 provision, with a single management

committee with representation from CSLT, SEBD and mainstream headteachers as well as other key partners.

4.3 The closure of the existing provision and the reopening of a number of separate provisions will be subject to the following timescale:

- Closure of existing provision August 2008
- Opening of new provisions September 2008

5. Conclusion

5.1 The Review Committee is requested to note and comment on the following:

- The content of the Ofsted Inspection Report
- The approved Action Plan
- The position as to management and staffing changes
- The position as to immediate changes to provision for young people
- The proposal to recommend closure of the existing provision and opening of new provisions within the proposed timescale

6. Background Papers

None

7. List of Appendices

- Ofsted Inspection Report
- Action Plan

